

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSC-10

USIE-00 PM-07 SS-15 RSC-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 IO-13 DPW-01

AID-20 L-03 H-03 PA-03 PRS-01 SSC-01 EB-11 HEW-08

RSR-01 /158 W

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5209

INFO WHITE HOUSE

CIA

DIA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

CINCPACAF

CINCPACFLT

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN

USDEL JEC PARIS

SECDEF

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C O R R E C T E D COPY (FOR HEADING)

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PINS, PINT, PFOR, LA, US, VN, XC

SUBJECT: THE LAO CEASEFIRE -- 23RD WEEK

REF: VIENTIANE 5211

I. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

MILITARY COMBAT ACTIVITY IN LAOS DROPPED OFF DURING TWENTY-THIRD WEEK OF CEASEFIRE. EIGHT INCIDENTS REPORTED (ALL BUT ONE IN SOUTHERN LAOS), INCLUDING THREE MAJOR INCIDENTS IN MR-III. ON JULY 26, FAR BEGAN MULTI-BATTALION SWEEP OF WEST BANK XE XANG XOY RIVER (WD 4030) IN RBEPONSE TO ENEMY ATTACKS IN THIS RICE-RICH AREA. TO DATE ONLY LIGHT RESISTANCE ENCOUNTERED, AS PL UNITS APPEAR TO HAVE WITHDRAWN TO EASTERN BANK, ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE FORTHCOMING IN NEAR FUTURE. RLAF FLEW 25 SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF FAR IN THIS AREA.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. NEGOTIATING MOMENTUM REPORTED IN LAST WEEK'S SITREP CARRIED OVER INTO THE 23RD WEEK OF LAO CEASEFIRE; AND IT APPEARS THAT THE TWO SIDES WILL SIGN THE POLITICAL/MILITARY PROTOCOL TO THE VIENTIANE AGREEMENT WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK OR TWO. WORD OF A BREAKTHROUGH IN THE INTERNAL TALKS WAS COMMUNICATED TO UK AND USSR AMBASSADORS, AS WELL AS TO ICC REPS, ON JULY 28 BY LPF DELEGATION MEMBER SOTH PHETRASY, WHO SAID ALL SIGNIFICANT ISSUES BETWEEN LPF AND RLG HAD BEEN RESOLVED.

B. FOLLOWING IS DISTRIBUTION OF PORTFOLIOS WHICH HAS APPARENTLY BEEN AGREED UPON (LISTING IN PARENTHESIS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY HEAD RLG MINISTRIES IS SLIGHTLY ADJUSTED VERSION OF LOCAL PRESS ACCOUNT WHICH SEEMS FAIRLY ACCURATE):

RLG
DEFENSE (SISOUK N CHAMPASSAK)
INTERIOR (PHENG PHONGSAVAN)
FINANCE (NGON SANANIKONE)
EDUCATION (LEUAM INSISIENGMAI)
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PUBLIC HEALTH (TIAO SISOUMANG SISALEUMSAK)

LPF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ECONOMY/PLAN
INFORMATION
PUBLIC WORKS
RELIGION

PERSONS AGREED ON BY THE TWO SIDES WILL HOLD THE MINISTRIES OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPH AND OF JUSTICE.

C. LPF COMPROMISED ON QUESTION OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS, AGREEING TO TWO DEPUTIES, WITH THE SENIOR DEPUTY BEING PATHET LAO (PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG). THE JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL (JNPC) WILL BE COMPOSED OF 42 MEMBERS, 16 EACH FROM LPF AND RLG, PLUS TEN OTHER "QUALIFIED" PERSONS AGREED BY THE TWO SIDES. LPF WILL HOLD PRESIDENCY AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF JNPC AND RLG WILL HAVE VICE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL.

D. TWO SIDES REPORTEDLY AGREED THAT LPF WOULD STATUUN THREE ADDITIONAL COMPANIES OF TROOPS AT VIENTIANE AND TWO AT LUANG PRABANG TO PROVIDE SECURITY FOR LPF MINISTERS IN THOSE NEUTRALIZED CITIES. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, HOWEVER, THIS ISSUE (INCLUDING THE PRECISE NUMBER AND POSITIONING OF TROOPS AND THEIR EQUIPMENT) HAS NOT BEEN FULLY RESOLVED. EACH SIDE WOULD ALSO HAVE 500 MEMBERS OF JOINT POLICE IN VIENTIANE AND 250 IN LUANG PRABANG. REPORTEDLY, SOME 20 DEMARCATION STAKES WILL BE PLACED IN "HOT SPOTS" TO SEPARATE OPPOSING FORCES. THE PROTOCOL MAY ALSO PROVIDE FOR SIX JOINT LAO MOBILE INSPECTION TEAMS.

E. COMMENT: WHILE THE MAJOR ISSUES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND SIGNING OF THE IMPLEMENTING PROTOCOL APPEARS IMMINENT, THE NEGOTIATIONS SEEM YET TO BE ENGAGED IN PULLING AND TUGGING AT THE LOOSE ENDS, WHICH, HOPEFULLY WILL NOT UNRAVEL THE AGREEMENT. TIMING NOW WILL DEPEND MAINLY ON THE PRIME MINISTER.

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